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ABSTRACT

This publication explains, through examples of current library programs around the United States, how libraries affect the education of children, and offers an impetus for others to embrace the challenge of providing quality library programming for children. Through these programs, libraries work toward achieving national educational goals, and reinforce education reform. Suggestions and descriptions of activities are divided into four main sections: (1) "Libraries help preschoolers get ready to learn how to read; (2) "Libraries strengthen reading skills of school-age children"; (3) "Libraries complement all aspects of children's school activities"; and (4) "Libraries connect children with computers and the information superhighway." Contains a directory of the libraries whose programs are highlighted. (AEF)

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Libraries Enhance Student Learning

by
Shirley Steele and
Amanda Heim

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Libraries Enhance Student Learning

A Guidebook of Innovative Library Programs for Youth

by
Shirley Steele and
Amanda Heim

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement

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The projects outlined in this publication were compiled after extensive research, using the U.S. Department of Education records, as well as library publications such as *Library Hotline* newsletter, *Journal of Library Services to Young Adults*, *The Bowker Annual 1996*, *Excellence in Library Services to Young Adults: The Nation's Top Programs*, and individual state newsletters.

June 1997

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A letter to **librarians, teachers, and parents**

Welcome to *Libraries Enhance Student Learning: A Guidebook of Innovative Library Programs for Youth*!

It is our goal by compiling this publication, that you, our nation's educators, will use it as a resource for more clearly understanding:

- **the important role libraries play in education,**
- **what libraries do to help children learn,**
- **how the library is changing to better serve the needs of today's kids, and**
- **how to implement similar programs as the ones highlighted here, in your own schools and libraries.**

This publication tries to explain, through examples, how libraries affect the education of our youth, and offers an impetus for others to embrace the challenge of providing quality library programming for our children. Through these programs, libraries work toward achieving our national education goals, and reinforce education reform. Libraries are preparing preschoolers to learn to read, strengthening the reading skills of school-age children, complementing other school activities, exposing children to computers, new technology, and connecting them to the information superhighway.

exciting

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How libraries enhance student learning

On August 27, 1996 President Clinton announced The "America Reads" Challenge, a major initiative to ensure that all children can read independently and well by the end of third grade. Our nation's libraries are essential in helping to meet this reading challenge. Libraries are preparing preschoolers to learn to read, strengthening the reading skills of school-age children, complementing other school activities, exposing children to computers, and connecting them to the information superhighway. By supporting these efforts, libraries are moving us closer to the goal of an America where every 8-year-old can read.

U.S. Secretary of Education
Richard W. Riley

Our nation's libraries are changing. The library of yesterday, one in which the public was charged a fee to do a computer search because it was such a special service, has become the library of today, where free access to the Internet from any branch of the library is becoming routine. Libraries are leaving their four walls of knowledge and entering an entire world of knowledge through the information superhighway. Media specialists can now access other library collections, community information, government records, and the World Wide Web (WWW) from computer workstations in the library. Library staff are physically leaving their four walls to provide more outreach services to schools, community centers, day care facilities, recreation centers, housing projects and homeless shelters, nursing homes, and correctional facilities. The library has become a community resource center, where checking out books is only the beginning.

With 37 percent of all library users under the age of 14, the library is changing its role in providing services for children. Through the advent of technology and need for supplemental learning, the library has become a dynamic learning center. It is a place that not only provides more books, computers, and other resources than any parent could possibly afford, but it also provides programming that utilizes that wealth of materials to engage children in activities that are exciting and fun, yet vital to their skill development. To promote children's reading skills, libraries offer services such as summer reading programs, storytimes for preschoolers, reading partnerships/mentorships, Battle of the Books, and workshops for parents and professionals on the importance of reading to young children. Many libraries provide computer workstations, especially for use by children and young adults, complete with CD-ROM software designed to meet their educational needs, computer workshops, and free access to the Internet. Many branches now have special library Kid's Home Pages that contain interactive games and activities for kids of all ages.

Our children may be only 20 percent of our population, but they are 100 percent of our future.

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley

Reading literacy and computer literacy are the most important skills our children need to take advantage of their education and secure future success. Reading has always been crucial to a child's well-being and completion of formal learning, and now in the information age, computer literacy is just as important. Those who are not familiar with computers and new technology will be lost in the 21st century. Libraries connect children with the materials and people who will provide them with what they need to learn and grow, making the library an instrumental factor in implementing education reform. While they cannot meet all children's educational needs on their own, the programs highlighted in this publication are filling in the gaps for many students. Children, parents, and teachers probably do not realize everything that their library offers to help prepare preschoolers to start school and learn how to read, to develop stronger reading skills in school-age children, to complement all aspects of school activities, and to provide opportunities for students to explore and learn how to use computers and the Internet. The quality programs described here are making great strides in challenging, inspiring, and encouraging our youth. They are the programs that are reaching out, tutoring, logging on, sharing resources, listening, and making a difference in children's lives by making learning more meaningful, more accessible, and more complete. In so many innovative ways, these programs are helping students come closer to reaching their goals.

It is extremely important to help students start off their school years right by teaching them good reading habits at an early age.

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Libraries help preschoolers get ready to learn to read

Infants' early experiences provide a foundation for intellectual and emotional development, their understanding of language, and social skills. Talking, singing, rhyming, and reading to a young child offers stimulation that will enable them to learn, make choices, and develop relationships and higher order thinking skills. These activities also develop a healthy, happy, trusting environment that is conducive for a young child to further explore the world around him or her. Exposing young children to books and reading, and starting to develop their pre-literacy skills are important to their success once in school.

Libraries offer programs that provide children with these types of experiences and mental stimulation. Storytimes, learning play kits, and puppet shows are a few examples of what libraries are doing to prepare children for learning. Libraries are also preparing parents, through outreach programs, for their role as their child's first and most important teacher.

Understand the importance of making reading a lifelong habit

Born To Read

Many parents are now aware of the importance of making reading a lifelong habit for their children, beginning in infancy, due to the success of the Born To Read programs in the Abbeville-Greenwood Regional Library in South Carolina. Library staff visit new mothers at the Child Birth Center at Self Memorial Hospital to share information about reading. **One-on-one contact and reliance on cooperation among community agencies, including the county health department, Greenwood Literacy Council, and Greenwood School Districts numbers 50, 51, and 52, distinguish the Born To Read program from others of its kind.** The project also provides *Library Link/Baby Talk*, a newsletter addressing parents of young children; covering information on children's books, library activities, child development, parenting tips, adult literacy, and workshops for day care providers. Working with school district number 50, the project produced a video, *Tips for Reading to Your Baby*, promoting pre-literacy skills, and appropriate for use with parenting groups and preschool organizations. This project is making great strides in demonstrating to new parents the importance of reading to young children.

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Listen to a storytime presentation at day care

Storytime Kits

Children at day care facilities can participate in a storytime activity during day care hours due to a project implemented by Central Massachusetts Regional Library System. Aimed at providing outreach services to day care providers, the Worcester Public Library created 100 Storytime Kits that include books, a toy, a video, and suggested activities, to be circulated to providers through their local libraries. **The staff prepare both print and non-print materials on topics important to day care providers; such as child development, day care practice, and use of books to develop pre-reading skills.** Four workshops were conducted for children's librarians on how the thematic story kits can be used and promoted. The project's large audience proves it s success; over 100 day care providers use the kits to develop a strong foundation that their young people will need during their school years.

Play with a theme-based learning kit on family, different cultures, or careers

TATL Packs (Tomorrow's Adults in Today's Libraries)

Children can use theme-based learning kits called TATL Packs based on themes such as self, family, backyard habitats, big things that go, monsters, math, and careers. The Finger Lakes Library System in New York, provides ten multimedia programming kits, from which librarians can choose materials for story programs and other library activities. Items such as soft toys, puppets, CD-ROM's, science related items, paints, puzzles, and posters are included in the kits. The library held a workshop for educators to demonstrate use of the kits. The kits are aimed at children three- to seven-years of age, and reflect qualities of self esteem, respect, and humor. **The kits help children become socially ready for school, and develop pre-literacy skills through storytelling and use of the media in the kits.**

Foster young children's interest in reading

Reading Readiness Kits

Families and caregivers can spend time learning with their preschoolers using Reading Readiness Kits, offered by the Noxubee County Library in Mississippi. The literature based kits are meant to introduce and foster reading readiness for children ages four to seven. The kits include books, puppets, audio cassettes, games, crafts, finger plays, drama, music, and discussion extenders; both learning resources and skill development activities. The Community Homemakers Club constructed patterns and samples of craft activities, such as flannel boards and paper sack theaters to be included in the kits. **Each kit, packed in a sturdy Tupperware container, provides five days of activities.** The kits are available throughout the county's library, elementary schools, and Head Start and day care centers, in an effort to improve children's reading ability.

Visit the bookmobile

"Hot Wheels"

"Hot Wheels" is a bookmobile for children in day care offered in Alameda County, California. **The children's librarian drives the van to different home care sites, offering children enrichment materials such as story kits and over 5,000 books.** Workshops offer the care providers a chance to learn how storytelling and puppetry can help children develop important pre-literacy skills. The librarian and "Hot Wheels" van serve 28 day care homes and 31 centers, reaching a total of 9,650 children and 150 employees. This program, sponsored by the Alameda Free Library, gives day care providers the material they need to develop creative programming for children.

Checkout toys, games, or videos

Play and Learn Center

Parents can checkout toys, games, puzzles, video and audio book sets, and parent resource books from the Play and Learn Center at Maquoketa Free Public Library in Iowa. The creative array of materials and resources help parents nurture their young children's emotional and intellectual development, preparing toddlers to begin their formal education. Parents can use the materials checked out from the Play and Learn Collection to try to stimulate children's minds to form ideas and make connections. This project is a cooperative community effort among representatives from social service agencies, schools, and the public library. **Through this project, parents are able to better prepare their children to start school.**

Hear a storyteller

Get Ready To Read Program

Children can attend any of over 20 programs held in promotion of the Get Ready to Read Program, a program aimed at preschoolers in Saginaw County, Michigan. The programs include storytimes, puppet shows, games and crafts, and interactive reading sessions. The Hoyt Library also works with area agencies involved in early childhood education, local schools, and day cares, to sponsor a series of workshops, seminars, and storytelling visits. **This project is helping expose children to reading and books in their early, critical years, in order to develop skills necessary for them to learn to read on their own.**

Get Ready to Read

To my mind, our most urgent task today in education is to get America reading again. We need to teach our children good reading habits—and get America serious about reading.

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Libraries strengthen reading skills of school-age children

Reading ability turned out to be one of the best predictors of later success both at work and in marital and parental relationships in a study conducted over more than 40 years by Dr. Emmy Werner and her colleagues. Other studies have shown reading and library use are key factors in a child's intellectual development. Reading encourages emotional as well as intellectual development, as a child learns to share in another's happiness or misfortune and to broaden their interest beyond themselves.

Libraries provide children with the materials to practice reading skills, but also provide programming that helps them utilize those materials. Reading is the first priority, so many libraries have programs that encourage reading in youth; offering incentives to discover books. Some libraries have created programs that make literature more tangible and relevant in children's lives, and still others try to show children how books can be used to guide us through the challenges of daily life. Summer reading programs, offered at most public libraries, have been shown to be the most important factor in avoiding the decline in reading skills which educators refer to as summer learning loss.

Play basketball to improve your reading

Rebound and Read

Rebound and Read is a Geneva Free Library program that allows children to improve their reading skills during a basketball summer camp. For five mornings during the summer, 125 students play basketball in the local armory gym. In addition, the camp coaches read aloud to the children, and they read on their own in the classrooms. **The program is designed to attract reluctant readers—children who are not regular library users.** The camp makes two trips to the library, and the children register for their own library cards. The library provides a reading collection for the camp, with materials appropriate to the age and interests of the participants. By combining sports and reading, this program shows children that reading can be fun, and a part of what people enjoy doing.

Make a commercial *selling* your favorite book

Teen Book Commercials

Teens can audition to star in an original commercial encouraging other young people to read their favorite book. All the teens who audition earn 50 points toward the Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library's summer reading program, but the local TV station, WFYI Channel 20, chooses 30 teens' commercials to broadcast. The library, in cooperation with the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) offers this new component of their annual summer reading program to target teens ages ten to fourteen. **By selecting teens to share their interest in reading via television, the program creates positive role models for teens.** Also, the commercial is an opportunity to have individual opinions heard. Teens promoting literacy activities generate a stronger statement than adults promoting it. Almost 150 young adults auditioned at their library for the commercials, and the WFYI staff reviewed the taped auditions in search of enthusiastic ones. The commercials ran during after school hours from 3:30 to 6:00 p.m., between PBS programs. This unique program benefits everyone participating, offering a chance for teens to explore their creativity by creating an original commercial, and inspiring many more teens to discover the library.

COMMERCIALS

Publish a storybook of your own

Peer Production Program

Imagine creating an original story, writing it, illustrating it, publishing it, and checking it out from your local library... That's exactly how elementary school children are spending their summers in the Peer Production Program in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. **The goal behind this fun experience is to relate literature to children by exposing them to stories written by other children—adding them to library collections, reading them at storytimes, and using them for creative dramatics.** The book production portion of this program runs for three weeks, at three workshops held at the Broward County Library. Students first recall their favorite story and are asked to analyze the ingredients that go into it. Then they make up their own original story, which librarians help the children to key into the computer, layout in book form, insert illustrations, and publish the finished product.

In honor of the project's completion, a new writer's reception is held for parents and community representatives, and interest in the books has brought many people into the library for the first time. The second phase of the program runs for eight weeks, incorporating the new books with music, dance, math, art, and interpersonal relationships. This project provides children with a unique opportunity for developing their reading, writing, and analytical skills, while cultivating creativity and self confidence.

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Save a tree, a fish, or a pet ....read!

Earth Read Contest

Children are protecting the environment when they participate in Summer Reading Programs. The reading program at the Spokane Public Library in Washington gives young people a chance to read for the trees, fish, or animals. **If children complete the reading challenges, a tree will be planted by the Inland Empire Paper Company.** If they complete a few more challenges, a fish will be released by the Washington Water Power Company. There are also animal reading challenges, which if completed, pet food is donated to the Humane Society by Thunder Mountain Pet Supplies. The library holds special drawings for children in grade six or higher who turn in a book review, complete a newspaper reading column, or enter the Earth Read Contest. This project helps children realize that reading is important in today's world, and its effects are all around us; it also incorporates science and the environment with reading skills.

Learn about all the library has to offer through the CREW Program

Children Reading Everywhere

CREW is an ongoing library program in Florida. The goal of the CREW Program is to reach 100 percent of all public elementary and middle school students in Bay County, Florida, by providing outreach services to schools, recreation centers, and school based day care. Each branch of the Bay County Public Library gives 30-minute presentations at schools—a different one for each grade level—consisting of stories based on books at the library, poems, songs, and a short commercial inviting children to visit their local library. Librarians give booktalks to draw the children's interest and a booklist is distributed at the presentation for the middle school children. A CREW member attended the inservice meeting for all secondary school English teachers and was able to enlist their support for the program. **This program reached 13,125 children through the presentations, and for its enormous outreach effort, was awarded the Betty Davis Miller Youth Services Award in May 1994.** Cooperation with schools enabled the library to reach many students and encourage them to use library services to reinforce better reading skills.

Compete to recognize book and author trivia

Battle of the Books

A contest of enthusiasm and brains in which participants read up to 25 novels and then try to answer trivia questions taken from the text, is an annual event called the Battle of the Books in the County Public Library in Santa Fe, New Mexico. There are two divisions of the competition, elementary (grades 4-6) and young adults (grades 7-8). **Students can win prizes for themselves and their school, including a drawing for a book-set that is donated to a participating school library.** The contest, in which 200 students from 37 schools participate, provides incentives for young people to read, it helps them learn to read critically, and enables schools to win updated materials for their libraries.

Read and discuss books on family themes

Family Matters

Young people are encouraged to read and discuss books on family themes in a program offered at two public housing sites in Baltimore, Maryland. **In a six-week series, youth meet to talk about themes found in books that are applicable to their own lives.** The purpose of the series is to inspire interest in reading, help participants understand written ideas, and learn to discuss those ideas with others. The program also includes visits from storytellers, guest scholars, and celebrities. This program, sponsored by the Baltimore County Public Library, helps at-risk youth gain written and spoken communication skills, as well as offer an outlet for teens to talk constructively about family issues.

Earn school credit for reading books during the summer

Race To Read

Students' incentives for reading during the summer include earning school credit when they participate in the Race To Read program. Librarians from the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, Maryland, make presentations at high schools to about 940 students, promoting the summer reading program offered for young adults at the library. **Students can also earn rewards, such as tickets to events, passes for shows, gift certificates, and special opportunities by reading books from a selected list.** Schools with the most participants also win prizes. The goal of this program is to improve reading skills of students and improve school achievement. The program's strength is the partnership between the school and the library, providing an outlet for the library to reach a great number of Baltimore young adults, and giving students incentives to read that encourage it as a lifelong habit.

Libraries offer boundless opportunities for knowledge... Libraries offer a quiet, comfortable place to research, write, or just sit and contemplate new ideas... a place where students can gather after school to do homework, or participate in other learning activities. And, finally, libraries provide a place where parents and children can go together to share in the joys of picking out and reading books or using the Internet.

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Libraries complement all aspects of children's school activities

A 1992 study by the Colorado Department of Education found that the highest achieving students come from schools with good libraries. The library offers access to information necessary for learning, and access to technology that helps students become effective users of that information.

Going beyond information access, libraries help students after school through outreach programs. We know that simply attending classroom instruction is not enough for students to master the skills needed to graduate; students need supplemental learning at home during after-school hours. Yet, many children do not have a supportive environment, or an adult who can help them accomplish this task. Satellite homework centers, sponsored by the public library, provide a safe, quiet place for students to complete their schoolwork. Additionally, many libraries also offer after-school tutoring, provided by volunteers, or a homework hotline, where students can call to seek help with homework from teachers. These programs address the needs of young people for continuing their education, performing at grade level, and focusing on their work, despite the problems that plague many communities today, deterring them from school.

View over 30 hands-on exhibits

Science Alive!

Children celebrate science creativity and innovation with a day of events called Science Alive! in Saint Joseph County Public Library in Indiana. Local scientists and corporations hold demonstrations on various scientific phenomena to highlight the fields of science and technology for children in grades K-8. **Over 30 exhibits offer hands on experience for children, and local organizations participate as well.** This program is the result of collaboration of many different organizations; helping to show children the excitement of science and its vast applications apart from the classroom.

Plan a fashion show or meet with a tutor

Youth Outreach Program

Students can get homework assistance and participate in activities planned by a Youth Advocacy Council through the Youth Outreach Program in Riverside, California. At two middle school sites, and three Riverside County Public Library sites, homework assistance centers give students information access, help develop student literacy, and supply a connection between the school and library. **The program involves 40 high school and college tutors, helping middle schoolers study, tutoring them, and helping them to use the outreach materials.** Students can also work on computers and electronic encyclopedias, request library materials, receive instruction in using the online catalog, and receive additional research assistance from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. from two youth outreach librarians. The program also involves a Youth Advocacy Council, which helps to plan programming for young adults. Some activities sponsored by the council include a fashion show, assisting in video and book selection for the library's young adult section, and helping to plan, design, and collate a recent youth survey that was distributed to all of the Riverside Unified School District. The homework centers have served over 1,515 students, helping them set and attain learning goals.

Travel around the world or take a sea voyage

Passport to the World

Children can travel around the world visiting faraway places through reading and interaction with natives of those countries, or take a sea voyage by tracking a Massachusetts Maritime Academy ship's trip to the Caribbean; all in one summer thanks to a summer reading program at the Plympton Public Library in Massachusetts. The program, Passport to the World, shows elementary school children the many worlds that are open through books. The library offers ten programs throughout the summer, beginning with a Bon Voyage party, at which children receive passports, complete with their picture, and travel logs. **The participants learn about different cultures and countries, listen to stories and music, make crafts, dance, and sample ethnic foods.** Each time children attend programs, they get their passport stamped, and are encouraged to record the facts they learn about a country in their travel log. As well, the children are able to correspond with the captain of a sea voyage. Before leaving, the captain meets with the children, and gives them a map of the voyage, expected ports-of-call, a calendar of arrival dates, a hurricane tracking chart, and information about the Academy. The children write letters to the captain, and upon his return are taken on a tour of the ship. This project also enabled the librarians to update the children's reference and nonfiction sections, adding books, videos, electronic geography games, computer software, and foreign language kits.

Listen to a presentation on the hows and whys of science fairs and inventing

Science and Invention Connection

Presentations on science fair basics, inventing, and other science and technology subjects are sponsored by the Lee County Library System in Florida through the award winning project, Science and Invention Connection. **The project promotes science and technology resources to students and enhances the library's youth services science and technology collection.** Science and technology experts present programs on subjects such as auto design, Florida reptiles and amphibians, dinosaur footprints, nuclear power, and sharks at area schools and libraries. The presentations inform over 5,000 first-through seventh-graders about the county library system services and inspire them to use the library to discover science. In addition, four branch libraries received multi-media computers with science and technology CD-ROM applications. This project won the 1996 Betty Davis Miller Youth Services Award for its new and creative manner of inspiring students to use the library to solve the mysteries of science.

Find a homework helper

Library Homework Center

Homework Centers have been created in five branches of the Mohawk Valley Library Association in New York. Students, grades four through eight, can go to the centers for quiet study and focused learning. The libraries each purchased at least two multimedia computers, and the Mohawk Valley Library Association, purchased two for each library as well as CD-ROM applications for use by students in the center. The libraries hold workshops to get librarians acquainted with the new technology, and the tutoring program, called Homework Helper. **The Homework Helper program involves volunteers offering individual help for students at the center.** The libraries also developed a Homework and Research Aid booklet that students can use in completing term papers and doing research. The staff from the libraries visit classrooms and give out promotional materials to encourage students to use the homework center. Used by over 700 students, the center helps children focus on their schoolwork.

Get help choosing a science fair topic or meet with other teens to select a best book list

Teen Advisory Boards

Teen Advisory Boards in middle schools in Arlington County, Virginia meet to talk about books and to select annual best book lists, while others, meet countywide to discuss science fiction. One group of young people who are learning English as a second language, meets to improve language skills. These groups and many other programs, are creating a growing information connection for young people through a partnership between the Arlington County Public Library and Arlington Public Schools. **The media specialists work as substitutes in public libraries, meet as a group with children's librarians twice a year, and join children's librarians for book selection.** The county also holds a Bookfest for at-risk children to visit with an author and select a book to keep. The public library attends all science fairs, and holds sessions on how to choose a topic and gather information. There is an Internet station in the library's young adult area, which is reserved for 12- to 18-year olds, and offers a hotline for teacher assignments. The libraries and the school are also working on a joint automation project that will produce a unified catalogue. This type of strong partnership generates communication that enables each partner to better serve the needs of young people.

Use an electronic history database or hear a presentation by a famous author

Kentucky History Project

Children in Kentucky's Oldham County can hear presentations given by Kentucky authors at their schools during the day or their local library at night, as part of the Kentucky History Project. The Oldham County Public Library created an electronic history database by scanning local history materials into a database, and loading the information onto disks that can be given to public schools or provided at each library for use by the students and the public. **The library also put together two Kentucky history collections containing print, audio, and video materials that can travel to public schools.** Librarians visit each school during the year to promote reading, do storytelling, and booktalks on fiction books by Kentucky authors. This project serves 7,500 students, providing them with real life historical documents and resources to use in their studies.

history

Learn how to cartoon, use a ham radio, or go on a nature hike

After School: Early Teen Outreach Program

These are all special activities that teens participate in through the leadership of the After School: Early Teen Outreach Program. The Siuslaw Public Library in Oregon developed this program to assist teens in developing literacy, problem solving, and information skills. The program channels youthful energy into library related activities and away from destructive activities. **The library provides homework assistance, humanities programming, field trips, and a location for teens to meet after school.** A coordinator selected new young adult books, magazines, music tapes, a computer and software, and furniture specially for the teen corner. Other programming includes historical skits, crafts production, a science-fiction film festival, storytelling, chess, a computer workshop, dramatics, painting, printmaking, and folktales. Special presentations include a holocaust survivor, a Native American artist/musician, and a Russian folklorist. Also, a local journalist volunteers time to help the teens publish a newsletter. This program gives teens many opportunities to expand their interests and develop valuable skills.

Find free tutoring at the library after school

The Free Tutoring Program

Students can find free tutoring for math, reading, writing, English, or most other subjects at the South Chicago Branch Library, Illinois. **The Free Tutoring Program provides a safe, quiet, and attractive environment for at-risk children, in grades 1 through 12 to seek the help they need with their schoolwork.** The program was established to help reduce the number of students who drop out of school. The library is helping students get on track and finish their education, by giving them a place to work on school activities.

Spend your night out at the library

Teens as Readers and Leaders

Nights Out at the Library, is part of a dynamic youth service program, called Teens as Readers and Leaders, at the Rock Island Public Library in Illinois. The program involves several components; extensive community outreach, opportunities for teens to increase knowledge and skills, to strengthen self confidence and self esteem by sharing these skills with others, and the development of exciting library resources and programs. Some other activities offered include mentoring, a life skills series, arts, crafts, and drama. **This program gives students a chance to develop a variety of educational interests in a supportive environment.**

Stay in school, thanks to the library!

Homework Assistance Project

In an effort to find ways to reduce the high school dropout rate in Decatur County, Georgia, the Decatur Library began a Homework Assistance Project. The library offers free tutoring, up to date reference materials, access to a personal computer for word processing and research, audiovisual materials, and copies of the student's textbooks, in a special area devoted to studying. **The library's program is helping students become productive adults by enabling them to complete their education.**

Learn about your family history

Roots and Wings

Roots and Wings, is a project that provides teens with an opportunity to learn about their family history. Working with other agencies, the Saint Paul Public Library in Minnesota developed this program involving a diverse group of teenagers. **Students research their community and family oral and written history; gaining information skills and a sense of their personal background.**

Learn Swahili, recite your original poetry, and attend a creative writing workshop

Young Adult Programming Council

Teens are learning new languages, presenting original poetry, and participating in creative writing workshops at their library in Seattle, Washington. The Young Adult Programming Council is a group of teens at the Seattle Public Library, who try to plan special programs for young adult library patrons. **The council sponsored a Swahili language workshop to celebrate Black History Month, a 2-day creative writing workshop for girls honoring Women's History Month, poetry readings by local young adult writers, and a games tournament including demonstrations of new computer equipment and live music.** This project's unique strength is drawing upon the young adults to plan activities that are best fit to their needs.

Celebrate different cultures through music and poetry

Let's Meet Through Music and Poetry

Students are learning about different cultures through books and music in a program called Let's Meet Through Music and Poetry. **The program attempts to build bridges of understanding and respect between ethnic groups.** Students in Illinois, at four branches of the Chicago Public Library which serves large populations of African Americans and Hispanics, explore the music and poetry traditions of each of their cultures, during 32 programs at the libraries. Programs such as this one, expand the library's role into a place for peaceful entertainment and education, through celebrating people's differences.

Ask questions about assignments

Homework Hotline

Students can call the Homework Hotline to receive help with school assignments in New Hampshire. A joint project involving the Merrimack school library and the public library, provides a hotline for students to call, located in the library, where media generalists and teachers are available for questions and to guide students through assignments. **This project gives students a reliable resource to call upon when they need some extra assistance in completing their assignments and working on core skills.**

Visit an exploratorium or meet your mentor at the library

Blue Skies for Library Kids

Children can participate in a great variety of programs including playing at the exploratorium, sharing quiet reading time with a mentor at the library, or getting involved in a homework assistance program, made possible through the Blue Skies for Library Kids program. The Chicago Public Library, in Illinois, in collaboration with community agencies, aims to create programs for children and their families to facilitate literacy and information skills. **Different types of programs include homework centers, family learning centers, workshops, community theater, field trips, cultural programs, job readiness centers, and parenting resource centers.** At each branch of the library, the staff plans what they will do to utilize their funds. At the Logan branch, the library created an exploratorium—a large room filled with games, toys, puzzles, and books that encourage families to spend time learning together. At the West Lawn branch, the library created a successful homework assistance center and tutoring program. At the Hall and DuSable branches, the libraries sponsored a program in which high school students, trained by the children's museum and library staff in storytelling and reading aloud, meet with younger children to emphasize books and reading. The Hall and Robert Taylor Homes branches of the Chicago Public Library, offer a Male Mentoring/ Read Aloud program for the primarily African-American community. The program features 15 high school students who spend two afternoons a week working one-on-one with young boys in the library, taking turns reading aloud to one another, and helping with homework. All the Blue Skies programs try to provide children with educational opportunities that will enrich their formal learning experiences and provide them with positive role models.

It is simply astonishing what young people can do once they make the connection between computers and learning. Universal service and affordable connections for schools and libraries, then, have long-term implications for educational quality and equality. Both are important national objectives.

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Libraries connect children with computers and the information superhighway

One of President Clinton's national education goals is for every classroom in the United States to be connected to the Internet by the year 2000. While we still have a long way to go before we reach that goal, efforts to expose children to technology are becoming reality very quickly. Students are able to access the information they need at the library, as 44 percent of public libraries are now on-line. Over 11 percent of public school libraries, and 21 percent of high school libraries are connected to the information superhighway. These connections are opening a world of opportunity to our children. Many libraries have computer workstations where students can use word-processing, desktop publishing, and science educational programs. CD-ROM applications offered at libraries enable students to use programs that teach the English language, search over 400 periodicals, or travel the globe in geography lessons. So no one is left out of the information era, many libraries offer technology specially equipped for disabled students.

Fewer than one in three households owns a computer, and only 10 percent own a modem required for on-line access. With these statistics looming, libraries are our best hope to close the gap between the information rich and information poor students. Those students who are not computer literate will not have the skills they need to succeed in the 21st century.

Work independently on a computer to improve language and math skills

Kids On-Line

Students in grades one through six can improve their English language and math skills using computers, through a program launched at two branch libraries in Yonkers, New York. The Yonkers Public Library provides software programs and computers for use by students. **The library requires participants to attend an instructional program on how to use the computers, then they are able to work independently on school work and basic skills.** The project, supported by the New York State Library, is making strides in preparing children for the information age, and teaching them the basics of math and reading.

Reserve a book at the public library by computer

Rural Library Computer Connection

Students and their parents in rural areas of Oklahoma can access the Norman Public Library through computers set up in local schools. In Byars, Maud, and Macomb schools, students can reserve books, search the Internet, and access the library's on-line database of 400 magazines with abstracts and full text, all through a computer, modem, and printer set up at their schools. **The library picks up and delivers the materials the students and residents need once a week.** This program, entitled the Rural Library Computer Connection exemplifies how, through technology, libraries are able to provide quality services and information access to all students, no matter their physical access to a public library.

Study for the SAT by computer

Teen Study Center

Students use Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and American College Test (ACT) software to prepare for tests, on the library's computers in the Teen Study Center at the Chicago Public Library, Illinois. **The Teen Study Center also provides access to the Internet, reference materials, and college and career information.** The center is a place for quiet or group study, and gives students an opportunity to explore how they can use technology.

Explore a mystery mansion or contribute to a mystery in progress....on-line!

Summer Reading Internet Pages

Get A Clue at the Library, is the theme of the Summer Reading Internet Pages on the Spokane Public Library WWW site in Washington. **The library has its own Kid's Home Page, designed to appeal to youth of all ages, and the library incorporates the home page into the summer reading program.** Younger children can explore the Mystery of the Mansion, complete with graphics and samples from the story. The interactive pages allow older kids to surf other Internet sites, submit book reviews, and contribute to a mystery in progress. This project provides children with the opportunity to navigate the Internet, and to acquire reading and computer literacy skills.

Use a special touch screen computer

Window on the World

Children can use computers with touch screen catalogues in all 15 libraries of the Baltimore County Public Library system in Maryland. The special screens are designed for use by physically challenged and learning disabled children. A special program called Window on the World (WOW) is available on these computers. **This project helps to bring technology and information to all young people, using creative solutions to make challenges easier for special students.**

Dial into the public library's catalog from school

Project SPARTAN (Schools and Public Libraries Advocating Resource Sharing Through Automated Networks)

Students and teachers can dial into the public library's catalog from school, as well as search and reserve library materials, including CD-ROM encyclopedias and magazine indexes on the library's network. A project called Schools and Public Libraries Advocating Resource Sharing Through Automated Networks (SPARTAN) provides this service at six schools in Sparta School District in Illinois. **The schools and the public library share resources using on-line computer technology and a community-school delivery system.** The CD-ROM searches allow for instant retrieval of full-text articles and references, and the reserved books and other resources are delivered directly to the schools by van. This project brings the library to all students in the school district.

Use interactive computers to learn the English language

Computers Helping To Teach Language Skills

Children can use interactive computers and software to work on English and reading skills. In a program targeting two groups—preschool children and children who are learning English as a second language, children can utilize technology to help meet the special needs of students learning a new language. The library staff at Mansfield Public Library in Connecticut is working with the school system to publicize the new service provided. **While the children learn language skills, they also experience the technology involved, helping them become both computer and reading literate.**

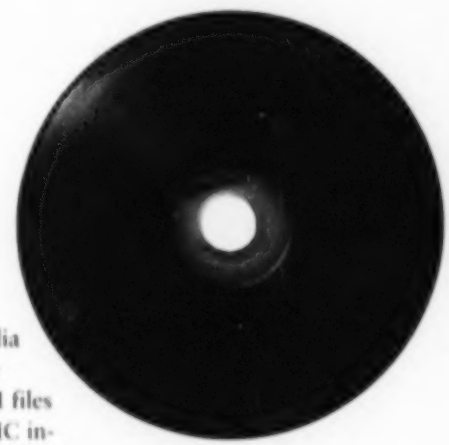
Listen to Mark Twain read excerpts from his work

Literary Internet Broadcast

On November 5, 1995, the first literary presentation was aired over the Internet, involving the Seattle Public Library in Washington and students from local high schools. The 20-minute presentation was broadcast to three schools, where students could ask questions of the presenter, scholar and historian, George Frein, acting as Mark Twain, through video connection. **The schools developed curriculum home pages featuring the full text of Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, photographs, Twain's signature, and audio portions of readings of Twain's work.** While the students were the only audience who watched the presentation live and were able to interact with "Twain," the program can be downloaded for others to enjoy. This program is truly a glimpse of the future of our libraries—where students can interact with scholars such as Frein, and their studies come alive. This experience allowed students to see new technology first hand, and learn how it can be useful in developing a connection between literature and writing skills.

Research scholarship opportunities and college information

Library Media Center



Students can research college information, scholarship computer search programs, tuition funding strategies, and other career information at the Career Center in the Edmond Memorial High School Library Media Center (LMC). Students can also research the high school's electronic catalog and CD-ROM files from their classrooms as well as from the LMC including the *Magazine Article Summaries*, *Newsbank*, *Facts On File*, and *Social Issue Resource Series*. Classes visit the library to coordinate use of the center with developing assignments. **The high school's LMC is part of the MetroNetwork in Oklahoma City, connecting it with an electronic bulletin for help with reference questions.** The LMC is also a member of the Oklahoma Library Technology Network, providing access to the catalog records of over 550 libraries for interlibrary loan. Serving 1,740 students, in grades ten through twelve, this program's efforts to connect students to as many resources as possible, is providing them with many opportunities to learn, research, and utilize new technology.

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Discover CD-ROM software

Learning Resources Center

Students discover many different CD-ROM applications, print materials, filmstrips, art slides, videos, computer programs, and transparencies available at the Learning Resources Center at Cedar Shoals High School in Athens, Georgia. Students can access the computerized network from classrooms, including the media center catalog, the University of Georgia Libraries and the Athens Regional Library. **Some applications offered to the students are *WilsonDisc, Grolier's Multimedia Encyclopedia, Granger's Index to Poetry, Discovering Authors,* and *Microsoft Bookshelf Reference Library for Windows.*** The computers also offer programs for word processing and desktop publishing. Teachers and librarians coordinate to teach students to use the library's resources—including a freshmen orientation to the Learning Resource Center. The School Library Media Center Advisory Committee of teachers, media specialists, administrators, students, and parents meets monthly to plan the media program. The Learning Resources Center gives students an opportunity to gain knowledge of computer technology; helping them become information literate. The collaboration between librarians, teachers, and parents strengthens the center's support, ensuring it continued use.

Learn about new computer technology at a free summer camp

Computer Literacy Camp

Children can attend an exciting summer session of the Meriden Public Library Computer Literacy Camp, in Connecticut, where they learn computer literacy and job preparation skills. Participants can use the library's twelve Macintosh computers for children's use, and the adult computer center. Eight times a week, these sessions serve 75 people. The library encourages participants to return during open hours to practice what they learn in computer class. **The project targets at-risk teens' need for exposure to computer technology, and is an example of how libraries are bringing the information age to all students.** Students spend their free time exploring and learning computer skills, a facet of their education that is important, yet not emphasized during the school year.

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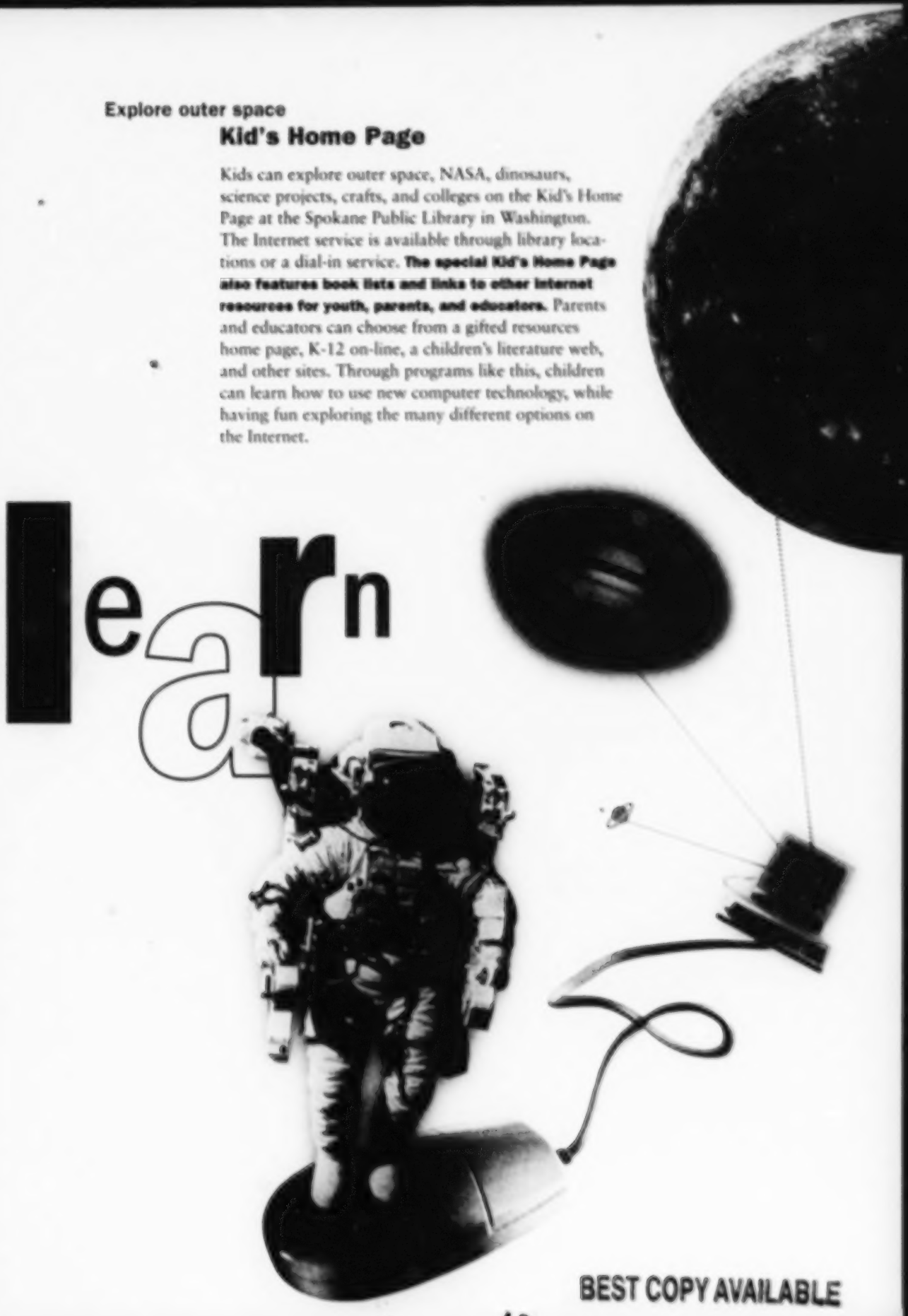
Explore outer space

Kid's Home Page

Kids can explore outer space, NASA, dinosaurs, science projects, crafts, and colleges on the Kid's Home Page at the Spokane Public Library in Washington. The Internet service is available through library locations or a dial-in service. **The special Kid's Home Page also features book lists and links to other internet resources for youth, parents, and educators.** Parents and educators can choose from a gifted resources home page, K-12 on-line, a children's literature web, and other sites. Through programs like this, children can learn how to use new computer technology, while having fun exploring the many different options on the Internet.



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Access any public school library database

SUNLINK

Students can access any union database of public school library media holdings with a statewide project in Florida underway, called SUNLINK. **SUNLINK's purpose is to provide greater access to information for K-12 students in Florida public schools.** The database is accessible via the World Wide Web through Brodart. This project pushes ahead of many other states in the effort to connect every classroom to the Internet, by creating one unified database for libraries to link up to, offering a great many more resources for Florida children.

Use CD-ROM software to learn English

Using Computers To Learn English

Students can use computer technology to learn English in a program developed to help recent immigrants improve their language skills. At the Gale Junior High School Media Center in Idaho Falls, Idaho, **students can use computer software, CD-ROM applications, and sophisticated video programs to pace their learning.** The program, Using Computers To Learn English, enables students learning English as a second language to work on their own, learning information skills and literacy skills that will help them to complete their schooling and develop better communication skills.

Directory of Libraries

Abbeville-Greenwood Regional Library
Born To Read (pg. 10)
106 North Main St.
Greenwood, SC 29646-2240
(864) 941-4650

Alameda Free Library
"Hot Wheels" (pg. 12)
2264 Santa Clara Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501
(510) 748-4669

Arlington County Public Library
Teen Advisory Boards (pg. 25)
2100 Clarendon Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22201
(703) 358-3348

Baltimore County Public Library
Family Matters (pg. 19)
Window on the World (pg. 34)
320 York Rd.
Towson, MD 21204-5179
(410) 887-6100

Bay County Public Library
Northwest Regional Library System
CREW Program (pg. 18)
Caller Box 2625
Panama City, FL 32402-2625
(904) 872-7500

Broward County Library
Peer Production Program (pg. 17)
100 South Andrews Ave.
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301
(954) 357-7444

Cedar Shoals High School
Learning Resources Center (pg. 36)
1300 Cedar Shoals Dr.
Athens, GA 30610
(706) 546-5375

Central Massachusetts Regional Library System
Worcester Public Library
Storytime Kits (pg. 11)
Salem Square
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 799-1655

Chicago Public Library
Blue Skies for Library Kids (pg. 29)
Let's Meet Through Music and Poetry (pg. 28)
Exploratorium (pg. 29)
Male Mentoring/Read Aloud (pg. 29)
Teen Study Center (pg. 32)
400 South State St.
Chicago, IL 60605
(312) 747-4300

Decatur Library
Homework Assistance Project (pg. 27)
215 Sycamore St.
Decatur, GA 30030
(404) 370-3070

Department of Education
Instructional Materials/Library Media
SUNLINK (pg. 38)
325 West Gaines St., 532 Turlington Building
Tallahassee, FL 32399
(904) 487-8753

Edmond Memorial High School Library
Library Media Center (pg. 35)
Edmond Public Schools
215 North Blvd.
Edmond, OK 73034
(405) 340-2916

Enoch Pratt Free Library
Race to Read (pg. 19)
400 Cathedral St.
Baltimore, MD 21201-4484
(410) 396-5395

Finger Lakes Library System
TATL (Tomorrow's Adults in Today's Libraries) Packs (pg. 11)
314 N. Cayuga St.
Ithaca, NY 14850
(607) 273-4074

Gale Junior High School Media Center
Using Computers to Learn English (pg. 38)
955 Garfield St.
Idaho Falls, ID 83401
(208) 525-7720

Geneva Free Library
Rebound and Read (pg. 16)
244 Main St.
Geneva, NY 14456
(315) 789-5303

Hoyt Library
Get Ready to Read Program (pg. 13)
505 Janes St.
Saginaw, MI 48607
(517) 755-0904

Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library
Teen Book Commercials (pg. 16)
2450 North Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46208
(317) 269-1775

Directory of Libraries continued

Lee County Library System
Science and Invention Connection (pg. 24)
2050 Lee St.
Fort Myers, FL 33901-3989
(813) 338-3150

Mansfield Public Library
Computers Helping To Teach Language Skills (pg. 34)
54 Warrenville Rd.
P.O. Box 206
Mansfield, CT 06250
(203) 423-2501

Maquoketa Free Public Library
Play and Learn Center (pg. 13)
126 S. Second St.
Maquoketa, IA 52060
(319) 652-3874

Meriden Public Library
Computer Literacy Camp (pg. 36)
Box 868
Meriden, CT 06450
(203) 238-2344

Merrimack Public Library
Homework Hotline (pg. 29)
470 Daniel Webster Hwy.
Merrimack, NH 03054-3694
(603) 424-5021

Mohawk Valley Library Association
Library Homework Center (pg. 24)
Homework Helper (pg. 24)
858 Duanesburg Rd.
Schenectady, NY 12306-1095
(518) 355-2010

Norman Public Library
Rural Library Computer Connection (pg. 32)
225 North Webster
Norman, OK 73069
(405) 321-1481

Noxubee County Library
Reading Readiness Kits (pg. 12)
103 E. King St.
Macon, MS 39341-2832
(601) 726-5461

Oldham County Public Library
Kentucky History Project (pg. 25)
206 East Jefferson St.
La Grange, KY 40031
(502) 222-9714

Plympton Public Library
Passport to the World (pg. 23)
248 Main St.
Plympton, MA 02367
(617) 585-4551

Riverside County Public Library
Youth Outreach Program (pg. 22)
3021 Franklin St.
Riverside, CA 92507
(909) 369-3003

Rock Island Public Library
Teens as Readers and Leaders
Nights Out at the Library (pg. 27)
401 19th St.
Rock Island, IL 61201-8143
(309) 788-7627

Saint Joseph County Public Library
Science Alive (pg. 22)
304 South Main St.
South Bend, IN 46601
(219) 282-4625
(219) 282-4630

Saint Paul Public Library
Roots and Wings (pg. 28)
90 West Fourth St.
Saint Paul, MN 55102-1668
(612) 292-6311

Santa Fe Public Library
Battle of the Books (pg. 19)
145 Washington Ave.
Santa Fe, NM 87501
(505) 984-6789

Seattle Public Library
Young Adult Programming Council (pg. 33)
Literary Internet Broadcast (pg. 35)
1000 Fourth Ave.
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 386-4636

Siuslaw Public Library District
After School: Early Teen Outreach Program (pg. 26)
P.O. Box A
Florence, OR 97439
(541) 997-3132

South Chicago Branch Library
The Free Tutoring Program (pg. 37)
9055 South Houston Ave.
Chicago, IL 60617
(312) 747-8065
(312) 747-0300

Sparta School District
Project SPARTAN (pg. 34)
328 Sparta Ave.
Sparta, NJ 07871
(201) 729-2155

Spokane Public Library
Earth Read Contest (pg. 18)
Summer Reading Internet Pages (pg. 33)
Kid's Home Page (pg. 37)
906 West Main
Spokane, WA 99201
(509) 626-5300

Yonkers Public Library
Kids On-Line (pg. 32)
7 Main St.
Yonkers, NY 10701-2784
(914) 337-1500

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